

"Lo I Am With You Always."

BY MRS. M. A. BLANCHARD.

The summer winds are sighing ;
The trees, with verdure crowned,
The flowers, in fragrance vieing,
Shed sweetness all around.

Storms in their wrath alarm us ;
The thunder crash we hear ;
But fear not aught will harm us ;
Jesus, our Saviour's near.

In the cold dark hour of sorrow,
Beneath a threat'ning sky,
His word dispels all terror :
"Fear not, for it is I."

Then let our souls embrace him
Each day with deeper love,
Till, in his likeness waking,
We reign with him above.

Follow Me.

BY LAURA E. N. GROSSNICKLE.

Down through the ages, floating on the wings of time, comes to us with mingled cadence of authority and encouragement the same divine invitation which echoed among the hills surrounding the beautiful but stormy sea of Galilee.

In the life of Christ we have an ever-living and perfect example of walk and conduct an example to which we can look for guidance in all circumstances in which we are placed, for he placed himself in the same circumstances and conformed himself to the same principles that he has laid down for us to observe. To us he holds out the invitation "Follow me."—Walk by my side, lean upon me, and do as I have done for "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Christ is the living way, the way to home, rest and heaven, and we must follow him if we would be forever blest. He went about doing good, laboring to promote both the temporal and spiritual good of men. If we would follow him we, too, must labor for the good of mankind. We must reach down and lift up the fallen and degraded to a higher plane of life just as Jesus showed compassion to those poor and despised sinners of Galilee. He loved to guide the wandering to raise up those who were groping in the shadows and darkness, to enlighten the ignorant and to minister to the needy and contemned. He visited the dwelling of poverty and comforted and encouraged the inmates and to us he says, "The poor ye have with you always, and when ye will ye may do them good" and to make it a pleasure as well as a duty he tells us "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these ye have done it unto me."

He visited the sick and afflicted and spoke words of comfort and sympathy. He stood by the tomb and wept with the sorrowing, bereaved ones, and he bids us "Weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice."

Jesus was merciful, pitying and forgiving, and he encourages us to be merciful by promises of reward. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." There is so much of sorrow, guilt and woe in our world, giving us opportunity each day to follow the Master's example of mercy and compassion to the suffering, sorrowing and wretched.

If we would be like Christ, we must learn that hardest of all lessons—to forgive. We must love our enemies, do them good when we have opportunity and pray for them even as Christ, in his agony on the cross, prayed "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Self must be put under subjection, and Christ must be all and in all to us ere human nature shall have ascended that high plane upon which we can stand with hearts so full and glowing with love to God and man, that memory shall cease to inscribe upon her tablets the wrongs that come to us from fellowmen, for the heart shall have learned the grand lesson of forgiveness to man, even as it has the full assurance of forgiveness from God.

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Abounding in the Work of the Lord.

The word "abounding" signifies an excess beyond what is sufficient. The New Testament teaches us that we are not to be content with a

little, or even with enough ; we are to go as far beyond that as possible. We may be doing well in the divine life, but we must not feel satisfied and proceed to congratulate ourselves over our attainments : we must abound yet more and more. The Scriptures are very full and clear on this point. "And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment ; that ye may be sincere and void of offense unto the day of Christ ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. i. 9-11). "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you ; to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (I. Thess. iii. 12, 13). "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. xv. 13). "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Col. ii. 6, 7). "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I. Cor. xv. 58). "But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also" (II. Cor. xiii. 7). "Finally then, brethren, we beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as ye received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, even as ye do walk, that ye abound more and more (I. Thess. iv. 1).

Too many are anxious to know how little they can do and still be saved. Whittier calls such persons shrewd economists, and says that they try to save their souls and their winter pork with the least outlay of salt and sanctity. Such persons have not the spirit of Christ. They forget that gospel measure is good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over. We are to strive to do our best in every relation of life. If we have done well, we must not be content, but do better thence again, and still better, in infinite progression. Paul could say : "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended ; but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14). Peter has the same thought : "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue ; and in your virtue knowledge ; and in your knowledge temperance ; and in your temperance patience ; and in your patience godliness ; and in your godliness love of the brethren ; and in your love of the brethren love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins" (II. Pet. i. 5-9). The persons to whom he wrote had obtained a like precious faith with himself ; they had become partakers of the divine nature ; yet he tells them to give the more diligence to make their calling and election sure. It was not enough that they had been called unto glory and virtue ; they were to add all the graces that belong to the completed Christian character. If they would do these things they would never stumble ; for thus should be supplied unto them the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is not enough that we were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come ; we must show the same diligence unto the fulness of hope even to the end ; we must not be sluggish, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

There is a wise proverb that says, "The good is a great enemy of the best." There is another that says, "He ceases to be good who ceases to be better." We lose what we have by failing to acquire

more. There are those in every church who are ciphers and who are content to be nobodies, when they ought to play the man for God. There are those who are amateurs who ought to be veterans. There are babes in Christ feeding on milk who ought to be full grown men partaking of solid food, and who by reason of use ought to have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Such persons need to hear the voice of the apostle, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give the light." The desire to be saved with the minimum of obedience is as far from the genius of the Christian religion as the east is from the west. Instead of trying to learn how little we can do without forfeiting all claims to be disciples of our Lord, we should strive to do as much as in us lies. No matter what the degree of moral excellence to which we attain ; no matter how effusive we become, it should be our supreme ambition to abound yet more and more. In our ignorance and frailty we can comfort ourselves with the assurance that God is able to make all grace abound toward us ; that we, having always all-sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work.

—CHRISTIAN STANDARD.

God's Medicine.

Labor is God's medicine for human pride and rebellion. When man had sinned, in order to prevent the utter demoralization of the race the Lord sent him forth out of Eden to till the ground, saying, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it thou wast taken : for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return."

It is the ambition of many to "live without work ;" but such a life is ruinous. "Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness," were the chief causes of Sodom's sin and Sodom's overthrow. Many a man who has gone headlong to perdition might have been living in health and decency to-day if he had been well employed in good, honest work. Under all judicious administration, human and divine, hard labor has been a means of grace and reformation to those who without it go far astray from truth and righteousness. Let persons live in luxury with nothing to do and they are very likely to become conceited, rebellious and ungodly. Let them be placed where they must work or starve, and let their hearts be brought down with labor and they speedily learn lessons of humility, sympathy, and integrity, which can never be learned in idleness and luxury.

More men die of laziness than of work ; more of gluttony than of starvation. Hence the primal curse was a real blessing, and those who try to evade the divine command only multiply sorrows to themselves. Hence the apostle says :

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they receive of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us : for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you ; neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day, that we might not burden any of you ; not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you that ye should imitate us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any will not work neither let him eat. For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all but are busy-bodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 2 Thess. 3 : 6, 13.—ARMORY.

Looking Up.

It would be well for all liars like Ananias and Gehazi to remember a remark once made by a little boy to his father who was meditating a theft of potatoes out of a field. The father looked east, west, north and south, and seeing no one, he began to pull up the roots.

"Father," said the lad, "there is one way you forgot to look."—Sel.